

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY
Meeting of Thursday, September 6, 2007**

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Patrick Dugan, Chairperson, Richard Buckler, Robert Hicks, Coleman Hillman, David Phalen and Andrew Roper.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Patrick Murphy, Robert Richardson and Lisa Wainger-Rush.

RECREATION, PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Phil Rollins, Director, Recreation, Parks & Community Services (RP&CS); David Guyther, Parks Manager, RP&CS; Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager, RP&CS; and Kathy Bailey, Recorder.

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting was called to order by Patrick Dugan, Chairperson, at 5:35 p.m. in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Robert Hicks motioned, seconded by Andrew Roper, to approve the minutes of August 2, 2007 as written. Motion carried 6-0.

RECREATION DIVISION REPORT

Mr. Rollins introduced Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager, who provided a report on Recreation Division activities and programs.

- Registration for fall leisure and sports programs began on August 29th.
- The Division's Program Guide is now being printed on regular paper instead of newsprint; this will result in a clearer, more easy to read guide.
- Summer camp programs concluded on August 10, 2007. This year represented the largest enrollment for summer camp in the Department's history.
- The "bubble" structure will be placed on the pool the week of September 10th for the fall and winter season.
- Christi Bishop, Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator, just returned from the Arizona State Parks and Recreation Conference where she gave several presentations on disability awareness.

PARKS DIVISION REPORT

Mr. Rollins introduced David Guyther, Parks Division Manager, who provided a report on Parks Division activities and projects.

- The Parks Division is busy making preparations to fields for fall sports. This includes inspecting fields, lining fields and making necessary repairs.
- Staff anticipates receiving agency approvals in the near future to begin improvements at Tall Timbers and Paul Ellis public landings.
- Parks staff recently completed painting all park restroom buildings.
- Staff plans to work with volunteers and the Tree-Mendous Maryland program this fall to plant trees at several parks and facilities.
- The Skatepark and Sprayground each completed a very successful summer season. The Skatepark continues to be open for the fall as long as the temperature is 40° or higher.
- Mr. Guyther stated that this has been a very busy year for park usage – especially pavilion rentals.
- Overall, problems with overcrowding have decreased at Elms Beach Park as the summer winds down.
- The Department is working to address a parking problem at Dorsey Park when St. Mary's Ryken High School uses the football field for their football program.

Chairman Patrick Dugan commented that the Bermuda grass soccer fields at Chancellor's Run Regional Park are in great condition. Mr. Guyther commended Parks staff for work on maintaining the fields this season. He thanked the St. Mary's Youth Soccer League for providing the funding for material for the Bermuda grass project.

Chairman Dugan asked if the Department uses "gray water" (effluent) to irrigate parks and facilities. Mr. Rollins stated that gray water is used to irrigate the Wicomico Shores Golf Course.

Richard Buckler asked how the Division determines where trees will be planted. Mr. Guyther stated that staff looks at each park or facility to determine where trees are needed. The Department works with master gardener Linda Carlson and professional landscape designers to decide where the trees should be planted and to help secure grant funding for trees from the Tree-mendous Maryland program.

Coleman Hillman stated that a tree is still on a power/telephone line in Charlotte Hall near the library. Mr. Guyther stated that SMECO and Verizon have been notified about this; he will place another call to them. Mr. Guyther will also provide the phone numbers to Mr. Hillman so he may call also.

REQUEST TO USE CHANCELLOR'S RUN PARK TO LAUNCH MODEL ROCKETS

Mr. Rollins briefed the Board on a request from a citizen to use Chancellor's Run Regional Park to launch model rockets. The Policies and Procedures manual is silent on this matter. This is the first time Mr. Rollins has received such a request. He did inform the person who made the request of the aero modelers club that uses Greenwell State Park for such activities. Calvert County does not allow the launching of model rockets or model airplanes in County parks. Staff will review this to see if there is a County park that is suitable for the activity and will report back to the Board. The Park Policies and Procedures manual may need to be modified to reflect this issue.

PROJECT UPDATES

Three Notch Trail – The County is still waiting for the concurrence in award from State Highway Administration to award the contract for construction of Phase II of the Three Notch Trail. The County hopes to award a contract within the next few weeks; construction should begin later this fall or winter and be completed next spring. SHA concurrence is needed since SHA National Recreational Trails funding is being used for this project.

The Wal-Mart section of the trail is under construction and the Kmart section should begin within the next several months. Design and engineering is nearly complete for Phase IV-A from Wal-Mart to Chancellor's Run Road. That phase is expected to be under construction next spring. The section from Chancellor's Run Road to Pegg Road will be coordinated with the FDR Blvd. construction. Also, design and engineering is currently underway for the section from Laurel Grove Park to MD 5 in Mechanicsville.

Cecil Park Tennis Courts – Design and engineering is moving forward to construct two new tennis courts and renovate two existing courts at Cecil Park. Staff hopes to have the design and engineering finalized in fall 2007 in order for construction to begin in spring 2008. Staff recently reapplied for grant funding from the United States Tennis Association to assist with the project; however, the project will move forward whether or not the grant funding is received.

Lancaster Pathway & Pavilion – Design and engineering is moving forward for the pedestrian pathway around the perimeter of John G. Lancaster Park. It is anticipated that the project will begin next spring.

Seventh District Park – Construction on the new restroom building at Seventh District Park is moving forward, although slower than anticipated. Funding was also approved in the FY08 Capital Budget to pave the entrance road and parking areas at this park. That will be done next spring after site plan design and approval to address storm water management. The Department hopes to hold a ribbon cutting ceremony for the entire park improvement project next spring.

Chaptico Park Parking Lot Expansion - Funding was approved in the FY08 Capital Budget to construct additional parking for the existing soccer/lacrosse complex at Chaptico Park due to problems associated with inadequate parking for youth league games on weekends. It is anticipated that the work will be completed for use in fall 2008.

Mechanicsville Volunteer Fire Department Request for Land at Chaptico Park – Details on the land donation and State Program Open Space conversion process continue to be worked out; Mr. Rollins will keep the Board informed as the project moves forward.

Park Maintenance Building Expansion – This project will add approximately 450 s.f. of office space to the Parks Maintenance Building. This project would be out to bid this fall with construction next summer.

Chancellor's Run Regional Park Ballfield Lighting – Funding was approved in the FY08 Capital Budget to add lighting for two existing multi-purpose fields to enable additional playing time for soccer and lacrosse at Chancellor's Run Regional Park. The lighting portion of the project will be bid in fall 2007 and completed in time for the spring 2008 season.

Public Landings – Paving roads and parking areas at Bushwood, St. Inigoes and Piney Point public landings will begin within the next few weeks.

Chairman Dugan asked about additional parking at the Wicomico Shores public landing. Mr. Rollins stated that he has discussed the need for additional parking at the public landing with the adjacent property owner and he is receptive to working with the County on this project. This may take considerable time to resolve however.

APPROVAL OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION PERMITS

Mr. Rollins informed the Board that alcohol consumption permits have been requested for:

- Friends of the Museum Division Piney Point Lighthouse Murder Mystery fundraiser, September 8, 2007.
- Seventh District Optimist Club Gala and Blessing of the Fleet, October 5 through October 7, 2007.

Andrew Roper motioned, seconded by David Phalen, approve the requests for alcohol consumption permits for the Friends of the Museum Division Piney Point Lighthouse Murder Mystery and the Seventh District Optimist Gala and Blessing of the Fleet . Motion carried 6-0.

OTHER

Mr. Hillman stated that he would like to see a train along the trail in Charlotte Hall. Mr. Rollins stated that sounds like a plan that would need to be spearheaded by a volunteer or private group.

Mr. Hicks asked if there is a master plan for the trail other than what is detailed in the Capital Budget. He suggested kiosks with maps and information for each section. Mr. Rollins stated there isn't a separate master plan for the trail, other than the information and maps on the website. Kiosks may be installed as trail sections are completed and funding is available.

Mr. Rollins thanked Dr. Roper for his presentation during the Maryland Association of Counties summer conference on August 16, 2007. The presentation - the Many Faces of Open Spaces – was very well received by those in attendance.

Chairman Dugan asked about the St. George's Homeowners Association meeting last month. Mr. Rollins stated that he attended the meeting which was very well attended by citizens. Agency representation included: St. Mary's County Sheriff's Department, Department of Natural Resources, RP&CS and State Highway Association. Citizen concerns included issues with fisherman, trespassing, littering and undesirable activity at the Dicey Langston Park. Agencies are currently working with citizens to address these problems.

Chairman Dugan asked if staff could look into why the North Soccer League is not sponsoring a U19 Select League integrated team with the St. Mary's Youth Soccer League (south soccer) this season. Mr. Rollins stated that may be because there were not enough players to form the team, but he will check into that (e-mail sent to R&P Board on September 13th in reply to this).

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board is scheduled for Thursday, October 4, 2007, at 5:30 p.m., in Room 14, of the Governmental Center, in Leonardtown.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on October 4, 2007.